

of crucial passages. The thesis that Judaism purged from its racial memory all traces of its pristine mushroom beginnings goes unattested and unproved and flies in the face of the biblical taboo against idolatry and Canaanite Baalism. To cite oneself in support of a number of hastily executed statements is indeed speculative and amateurish.

This study by Allegro, who was until recently a lecturer in Old Testament and Inter-Testamental Studies at the University of Manchester, will be criticized as verbose and over-generalized, but it is not without its redeeming features. His theory that there were serious doubts in Jewish attitudes of the time, contra Jewish tradition, towards Judas Maccabaeus and his brothers deserves further consideration. His chapters on John Hyrcanus and Alexander Jannaeus represent a convincing description of Jewish despotism. Especially illuminating is his survey of the Herodian period and its plots and counter-plots. There is a generous sprinkling of source material from Josephus, adequate plates, a good but limited bibliography, and no indices of subjects, names, and references.

Our objection to Allegro's findings may be due to innate conservatism which screams at scholarship that attempts to evaluate the ancient Jewish psyche without an honest and accurate understanding of the relationship between the Hebrew Bible and the oral traditions of the Mishnaic period, the chronology of which is the time span of the book under review. Allegro has a right to his opinion, and he has stated fully in a circular manner the grounds on which that judgment rests. But we suspect that a diet of mushrooms is necessary to satisfy the scholarly palate.

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ZEV GARBER

Aron, Robert. *The Jewish Jesus*. Transl. by A. H. Forsyth and A.-M. de Commaile, and in collaboration with H. T. Allen, Jr. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1971. vii + 183 pp. \$4.95.

Robert Aron, the decorated French writer of history and politics and the author of *Jesus of Nazareth: The Hidden Years* (1960; English ed., 1962), writes on the Jewishness of Jesus as reflected in the Jewish customs, prayers, and rituals he knew in his home, in the synagogue, and in the Temple. Written in a brisk, translucent, and absorbing style that often characterizes a good historical novel, this work could appeal to an audience with little knowledge of Jewish liturgy or with an ignorance of the cultural and religious world of Palestinian Judaism in the time of Jesus. The knowledgeable student and scholar, however, will find the work a gross disappointment. There is no attempt to grasp the origin and history of the noble ideas of liturgy presented. A critical appreciation of the structure and content of the liturgical cycle for the Sabbath, holidays, and weekdays is noticeably lacking. The reader is not exposed to the sources used in the author's recording of historical events in the life of Jesus and of Palestinian Jewry. A summary of the content of a prayer and often its relevance to the contemporary man of faith are given, but technical and scholarly comments are a scarcity. The book abounds in misinterpreted rabbinic sources, mistransliterated Hebrew, anachronisms, and popular ignorance of Jewish religious customs and observances.

It is highly questionable if the tradition of Elijah at the Passover meal, the Bar Mitzvah ritual, and the obligatory daily wearing of a *tallit katan* are found in first-century Judaism. The language of the *Kaddish* is not literary Aramaic (p. 62) but Hebrew-Aramaic, the vernacular of the Jews during the period of the Second Temple. The *Kaddish* in the Jewish service occurs in four different forms (five if one includes the *Kaddish of Renewal* recited at the graveside by the mourner after interment of the deceased), each with a different function, and not one as implied in the text. The author's selection of the *Mourner's Kaddish* as having been recited by Jesus (p. 62) is unfortunate since the original *Kaddish* was a doxology of the messianic hope whose language was derived from the prophets and psalmists and was recited by the teacher at the end of a religious discourse. It had no relation to the prayers and still less to the dead. In asserting that a 1st-century congregational service ended with the *Aleynu*, a prayer proclaiming God as supreme king of the universe and Israel's hope that humanity "on that day" (cf. Ex 15:18; Zec 14:9) will recognize the one God of Israel, the author shows his ignorance of the history of Jewish prayer. It is only since the 14th century that the *Aleynu* was selected to close all public services on weekdays, Sabbaths, and festivals. The version of the *Aleynu* cited (p. 63) is from the 14th century and it is essentially the *Aleynu* adoration edited by the Babylonian Amora Rabb in the New Year *Mussaf Amidah* but minus "For they bow down to vanity and emptiness and pray to a god who saves not." Granted that the ideas of the *Aleynu* (*nota bene* there is no reference to the destruction of the Second Temple) are very old, this does not mean that the poem was recited in 1st-century Judea since its composition as acknowledged by most scholars was 3rd-century Babylonia.

On p. 133 the author states, "The Seder itself is followed by readings from the Bible, and by songs, the most popular of which is the 'Song of the Kid,' the *Had Gadya*. It was composed in Aramaic . . . but only written down long after the time of the Second Temple." This may be taken as a typical "factual" understatement made often by Aron. In actuality, the "Song of the Kid" is written in poor Aramaic with a smattering of Hebrew words by an anonymous author of no earlier than the 15th century who modeled his poem after certain types of medieval European folksongs.

One is not at a loss to cite other errors and anachronisms. *Tishri* was not originally the first month of the Jewish year but the seventh. The earliest traditions of *Kabbalat Shabbat* may have begun with Ps 92 (p. 52) but this is not the situation today as claimed by the author. Since the beginning of the 17th century the Inauguration of the Sabbath has begun with Ps 95-99, and 29. These six Psalms, first introduced by Moses Cordovero of Safed, represent the six days of work. The *Amidah* of the Second Temple period consisted of more than six blessings (p. 60). The *Zaddikim* blessing (cf. b. Meg. 17b; benediction number 13 in the *Amidah* of every day) was composed at the start of the 2nd century and could not have been known by Jesus. The *Havdalah* ceremony, parts of the Grace after Meals (*birkat hamazon*), and Blessings on Various Occasions (*birkoth hanehenin*) described in the work were composed later than the period of Jesus and not during or before. On more than one occasion the author instructs with half a truth; this is

a dangerous thing. For example, he mentions that Ps 126 is chanted before the Grace after Meals, but he fails to state that this is only the custom on the Sabbath and holidays when joy is expressed. In other circumstances Ps 137 is recited.

Although specific presentations and arguments in Aron's book must be rejected outright, this volume can serve as a simple anthology of Hebrew prayers which the historical Jesus would have felt at home with, and it provides a convenient summary of Hebrew worship that can grace any inter-faith service. Footnotes are scarce and there are no indices nor bibliography. The work would have been strengthened considerably if the writer had been able to utilize studies in Jewish prayer aside from the excellent study by Dr. Joseph H. Hertz, *The Authorized Prayer Book* (originally published in 1948). Reference to the works of Grant, Oesterley, Dix, Dugmore, Arzt, Kadushin, Idelsohn, Werner, etc., are sorely missed.

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De Vaux, Roland. *Histoire ancienne d'Israël: des origines à l'installation en Canaan*. Paris: Librairie Lecoivre, J. Gabalda et Cie., 1971. 674 pp. F 100.

Here we have the first of a planned three-volume history of Israel on which the author had been working for some time when sudden death stopped his pen (see the preceding review of R. de Vaux's *The Bible and the Ancient Near East* in *AUSS*, 11[1973], 195-197). Fortunately the first volume was completed and could be published as a posthumous work.

This volume consists of a long Prologue and three parts. The Prologue treats the geography and climate of the Bible lands, and also the culture, archaeology, history, and religion of Canaan and its non-Israelite population from the beginning of the second millennium B.C. to the 13th century B.C. Part 1 deals with the patriarchal period, Part 2 with the Israelite sojourn in Egypt and the Exodus, and Part 3 with the period of the occupation of Canaan by the Israelites.

The author sees a justification for writing a new history of Israel in the appearance of Martin Noth's *Geschichte Israels* (1950; English translation, 1960) and John Bright's *A History of Israel* (1959), two works dealing with the same subject from diametrically opposed viewpoints. For Noth the history of Israel does not begin before Israel's settlement in Canaan; the biblical records about the patriarchal period and the time of the Exodus are no more than traditions about Israel's prehistory. Bright, representing the much more conservative Albright school, allows a much greater degree of historical reliability to these biblical records. De Vaux stands between the two opinions, although he leans more toward the views of Bright than toward those of Noth. He fairly and critically examines all available source material as well as practically every work that has appeared in recent years on the subjects discussed. It is regrettable that the author did not live long enough to see his task completed. Yet, we are grateful to have even this